

In an effort to avoid having Applicant's claims misread as merely requiring a compressed spring adjacent a piezoelectric device, Applicant has submitted to new claims 20-31 that are believed to define the invention in a way not shown or suggested by any reference of record. In particular, these claims make it clear that the invention is directed to a spring biased mechanism in which a moveable element is biased to a predetermined position, such as contact with a valve seat, via a compressed spring. The preload on that spring is then adjusted at least in part via a voltage to a piezoelectric device operably coupled to the spring. There should be no dispute that Bryant shows something other than what Applicant has claimed. No new matter is believed to have been added to the application by the submission of these claims. In addition, no fee is believed required. However, the Assistant Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to deposit account number 500226.

This application is now believed to be in condition for allowance of claims 20-31. However, if the examiner believes that some minor additional clarification would put this application in even better condition for allowance, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at (812) 333-5355 in order to hasten the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully Submitted,



Michael B. McNeil

Reg. No. 35,949